

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 040777  
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ADUBS:CF  
APPROVED BY NEA:ADUBS  
S/S-O:SGOLDSMITH  
NSC - MR. THORNTON

-----033617 160258Z /62

P 160208Z FEB 78 ZFF6  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY  
INFO WHITE HOUSE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 040777

NODIS  
FOR AMBASSADOR GOHEEN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PEPR, IN

SUBJECT: DESAI'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT OF FEBRUARY 7

1. QUOTED BELOW FOR YOUR INFORMATION IS THE TEXT OF PRIME  
MINISTER DESAI'S LETTER OF FEBRUARY 7 TO THE PRESIDENT.  
THE ORIGINAL WAS DELIVERED TO DR. BRZEZINSKI BY AMBASSADOR  
PALKHIVALA ON FEBRUARY 15.

2. QUOTE: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

AMBASSADOR GOHEEN CONVEYED TO ME ON FEBRUARY 1 YOUR LETTERS  
OF JANUARY 30 AND JANUARY 31, 1978. I AM INDEED GRATIFIED  
AT WHAT YOU HAVE SAID ABOUT YOUR VISIT TO INDIA. YOUR  
FEELINGS OF FRIENDSHIP ARE WARMLY RECIPROCATED BY OUR  
PEOPLE WHO, THROUGH YOUR VISIT, HAVE DEVELOPED A FEELING OF  
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GREAT RESPECT FOR THE SINCERITY OF PURPOSE WHICH YOU BRING  
INTO YOUR APPROACH TO PUBLIC POLICY. DUE TO THE IMPACT OF  
YOUR PERSONALITY AND APPROACH TO PROBLEMS INDO-U.S. RELA-  
TIONS STAND ON FIRMER GROUND TODAY AND THIS, I AM CONVINCED,  
IS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST AND ENLIGHTENED APPROACH TO THE  
SOLUTION OF WORLD PROBLEMS.

I SHARE YOUR CONCERN FOR THE DANGERS IN THE PRESENT  
SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR

ESCALATION. WE HAD BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THIS CONFLICT WHEN  
YOU WERE IN NEW DELHI. ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA, APART FROM  
BEING NEIGHBOURS LINKED TO US BY THE INDIAN OCEAN, ARE  
ALSO MEMBERS OF THE NONALIGNED FRATERNITY OF NATIONS.  
IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT WE HAD, SOME TIME AGO, URGED  
THE NEED FOR RESTRAINT AND AMICABLE SETTLEMENT ON THE  
PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE. THE SITUATION HAS BEEN SO TENSE  
THAT ANY CONCRETE INITIATIVE HAS SO FAR SEEMED PREMATURE.  
MEANWHILE, FIGHTING CONTINUES AND THE DANGERS OF INTER-  
NATIONAL PEACE BEING DAMAGED HAVE, I AGREE, INCREASED.  
IT HAS BEEN OUR VIEW THAT INTRA-AFRICAN PROBLEMS SHOULD  
BE RESOLVED IN CONSONANCE WITH THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF  
THE CHARTER OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY. WE  
WERE DISAPPOINTED THAT THE EFFORTS OF THE OAU TO BRING  
ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA TOGETHER HAVE NOT YET MET WITH  
SUCCESS. IN THE MEANTIME OUTSIDE INTERVENTION HAS  
ACCENTUATED BOTH THE DANGERS AND DIFFICULTY OF RESOLVING  
THE DISPUTE.

A JUST AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WOULD REQUIRE RECOGNITION  
OF THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPECT FOR THE INDEPENDENCE AND  
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE STATES IN THE REGION. BUT  
BEYOND THIS, WE AGREE, THAT SUCH PROBLEMS, AS THE PRESENT  
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SOMALIA-ETHIOPIA CONFLICT, REQUIRE RESTRAINT ON THE PART  
OF THE BIGGER POWERS AS THEY COULD BECOME MORE COMPLICATED  
BY INCREASING RIVALRY AND FOREIGN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT.  
IF YOUR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOVIET BUILD-UP OF ARMS  
PROVES CORRECT, THE DANGERS AND THE COMPLICATIONS HAVE  
COME CLOSER THAN ONE WOULD HAVE HOPED OR EXPECTED.

IN VIEW OF YOUR LETTER AND THE POSSIBLE GRAVITY OF THE  
SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA, I AM WRITING TO PRESI-  
DENT BREZHNEV AND WILL CONVEY OUR CONCERN AT THE DANGERS  
INVOLVED IN THIS BUILD-UP AND THE CONSEQUENT ESCALATION.  
IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT ETHIOPIA, WITH AN  
AUGMENTED MILITARY CAPABILITY, SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO  
CROSS THE OLD ESTABLISHED FRONTIERS. I AM, THEREFORE,  
URGING THAT ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE THE POSSI-  
BILITY OF ENCOURAGING EITHER PARTY TO CONTINUE OR  
ENLARGE THE SCOPE OF THE PRESENT CONFLICT SHOULD BE  
SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED AND INSTEAD STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN  
THAT THE DANGERS ARE REDUCED AND NOT INCREASED. I WOULD  
ALSO URGE THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND THE USA SHOULD  
MUTUALLY CONSULT EACH OTHER TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION AND  
PERHAPS TO PERSUADE BOTH PARTIES TO RESPECT THE LETTER

AND SPIRIT OF THE OAU CHARTER. MEANWHILE, IN ORDER THAT THE CONFLICT IS DEFUSED, I WOULD STRESS THE IMPORTANCE,

MR. PRESIDENT, FOR COUNSELLING ON SOMALIA AND ITS FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS THE URGENCY OF THEIR ACCEPTING A CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY TO RESPECT ESTABLISHED FRONTIERS IN THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

I AM HAPPY, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT YOU HAVE CANDIDLY EXPLAINED YOUR VIEWS ABOUT THE NUCLEAR PROBLEM IN YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 30, 1978. I AM GLAD THAT AFTER OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU AND LATER WITH PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN THERE IS NOW A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF MY BELIEF THAT IT IS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NUCLEAR  
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WEAPON STATES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF NUCLEAR WAR AND DESTRUCTION. AS YOU KNOW, SOON AFTER YOUR VISIT, I HAVE ALSO HAD OCCASION TO DISCUSS IT WITH VISITING SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN FROM THE USA. IT REMAINS OUR VIEW THAT FIRM STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN BY THE NUCLEAR WEAPON POWERS TO ABANDON THE NUCLEAR TESTS, TO HALT THE PRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND PROGRESSIVELY, WITHIN A FIXED TIME-FRAME, ELIMINATE THEIR NUCLEAR STOCKPILES IF THE GOAL OF NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS TO BE MEANINGFULLY ACHIEVED AND ENERGIES DIRECTED PURELY TO THE UTILIZATION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND YOUR SINCERE CONCERN ABOUT THE DANGERS OF PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, YOU WOULD APPRECIATE THAT HAVING UNILATERALLY FORESWORN THE INTENTION TO MANUFACTURE THESE WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, AND HAVING DEVOTED OURSELVES EXCLUSIVELY TO PEACEFUL PURPOSES OF ATOMIC ENERGY, WE ARE GENUINELY SENSITIVE AND CONCERNED ABOUT ARRANGEMENTS WHICH ARE CONSIDERED INEQUITABLE OR DISCRIMINATORY.

YOU WOULD RECALL, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT IN MY DISCUSSIONS WITH YOU, I HAD TOLD YOU OF THE FEARS EXPRESSED TO ME BY PRESIDENT BREZHNEV AT PRODUCTION OF THE NEUTRON BOMB BY THE USA. I HAD MYSELF EXPRESSED MY SERIOUS APPREHENSION THAT THE DEPLOYMENT OF NEUTRON BOMB BY USA COULD TRIGGER A NEW ARMS RACE BY FORCING THE USSR TO PRODUCE SIMILAR OR MATCHING WEAPONS AND NEGATE THE SEARCH FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT. MR. BREZHNEV HAS NOW EXPRESSED TO ME SERIOUS SOVIET ANXIETY AT THE PROSPECT OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB WHICH MAY CAUSE A SETBACK TO THE QUEST FOR AGREEMENTS ON LIMITING STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND INTERNATIONAL DETENTE. I SINCERELY HOPE THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE USA TO RECOGNIZE THE DANGERS INHERENT  
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IN THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW ARMS RACE BEING TRIGGERED  
BY THE NEUTRON BOMB AND THE FEARS ABOUT SECURITY WHICH  
IT ENGENDERS AND WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT, IN THE

INTEREST OF THE VERY OBJECTIVES OF NON-PROLIFERATION YOU  
SHOULD REFRAIN FROM GOING AHEAD WITH ITS PRODUCTION.  
SUCH A DECISION COULD RADICALLY IMPROVE THE CLIMATE FOR  
DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT.

I AM GREATLY LOOKING FORWARD TO MY FORTHCOMING VISIT TO  
THE UNITED STATES AND TO RENEW THE PERSONAL CONTACTS  
WHICH WE HAVE ESTABLISHED DURING YOUR VISIT TO NEW DELHI.  
APART FROM MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, I HAVE TOLD  
THE DELEGATION OF CONGRESSMEN, LED BY CONGRESSMAN WOLFF,  
WHEN HE SO REQUESTED ME THAT I WOULD BE HAPPY TO MEET  
MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.  
THEY THEMSELVES HAVE ALSO INVITED ME TO DO SO. I AM  
ALSO PLANNING TO UTILIZE THE OPPORTUNITY OF MY VISIT TO  
THE USA TO ADDRESS THE FORTHCOMING UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SPECIAL SESSION, WHICH MAY THEN BE IN SESSION, DEPENDING  
ON MUTUALLY CONVENIENT DATES FOR MY VISIT.

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PROBLEMS, AS VIEWED FROM NEW DELHI AND WASHINGTON, MAY  
NOT BE ALWAYS IDENTICAL, INDIA AND THE UNITED STATES  
HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON THAT WE WOULD DO OURSELVES AND  
FUTURE GENERATIONS A DISSERVICE IF WE DID NOT CEMENT  
CLOSER AND FRIENDLIER TIES BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS,  
INSTITUTIONS AND PEOPLES. I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THESE  
EXCHANGES OF VISITS AND OUR PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE WILL  
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MUTUAL TRUST, WARMTH AND FRIENDSHIP IN OUR RELATIONS.  
I NEED HARDLY REITERATE THAT I FULLY RECOGNISE THE  
IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND, LIKE YOU,  
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HER ON MY BEHALF HOW MUCH WE ALL HERE ADMIRE HER FOR THE  
WARMTH AND AFFECTION WHICH SHE HAS SHOWN TOWARDS OUR  
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WITH WARM REGARDS, YOURS SINCERELY, END QUOTE. VANCE

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S E C R E T STATE 040777

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FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOL STATE 040777 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO WHITE HOUSE  
FEB 16, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 040777

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I SHARE YOUR CONCERN FOR THE DANGERS IN THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR

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SIMILAR OR MATCHING WEAPONS AND NEGATE THE SEARCH FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT. MR. BREZHNEV HAS NOW EXPRESSED TO ME SERIOUS SOVIET ANXIETY AT THE PROSPECT OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB WHICH MAY CAUSE A SETBACK TO THE QUEST FOR AGREEMENTS ON LIMITING STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND INTERNATIONAL DETENTE. I SINCERELY HOPE THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE USA TO RECOGNIZE THE DANGERS INHERENT IN THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW ARMS RACE BEING TRIGGERED BY THE NEUTRON BOMB AND THE FEARS ABOUT SECURITY WHICH IT ENGENDERS AND WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT, IN THE

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I HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT EVEN THOUGH WE MAY HAVE OUR DIFFERENCES ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, THE PERSPECTIVE OF WORLD PROBLEMS, AS VIEWED FROM NEW DELHI AND WASHINGTON, MAY NOT BE ALWAYS IDENTICAL, INDIA AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON THAT WE WOULD DO OURSELVES AND FUTURE GENERATIONS A DISSERVICE IF WE DID NOT CEMENT CLOSER AND FRIENDLIER TIES BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS,

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WITH WARM REGARDS, YOURS SINCERELY, END QUOTE. VANCE  
UNQUOTE VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TEXT, DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, SALT (ARMS CONTROL), CAT-B  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Office:** ORIGIN NODS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
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**SAS ID:** 3570746  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** DESAI'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT OF FEBRUARY 7  
**TAGS:** PEPR, PPDC, PBOR, PARM, IN, SO, ET, US, (CARTER, JIMMY), (DESAI, MORARJI)  
**To:** NEW DELHI WHITE HOUSE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/2a7047d5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
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